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Globalization and interdependence: science and technology for development

Report of the Second Committee*

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I. Introduction

1. The Second Committee held a substantive debate on agenda item 56 (see A/62/421, para. 2). Action on sub-item (b) was taken at the 20th, 25th, 28th and 33rd meetings, on 1, 8 and 16 November and 7 December 2007. An account of the Committee's consideration of the sub-item is contained in the relevant summary records (A/C.2/62/SR.20, 25, 28 and 33).

II. Consideration of proposals

A. Draft resolutions A/C.2/62/L.11 and A/C.2/62/L.36

2. At the 20th meeting, on 1 November, the representative of Italy, on behalf of Algeria, Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Brazil, Bulgaria, Chile, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, El Salvador, Germany, Greece, Honduras, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Monaco, Peru, Portugal, San Marino, South Africa, Spain, Turkey, Ukraine and Uruguay, introduced a draft resolution entitled "International Year of Astronomy, 2009" (A/C.2/62/L.11), which read:

"*The General Assembly*,

"*Recalling* its resolution 61/185 of 20 December 2006 on the proclamation of international years,

"*Aware* that astronomy is one of the oldest basic sciences and that it has contributed and still contributes fundamentally to the evolution of other sciences and applications in a wide range of fields,

* The report of the Committee on this item will be issued in four parts, under the symbol A/62/421 and Add.1-3.

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"*Recognizing* that astronomical observations have profound implications for the development of science, philosophy, religion, culture and the general conception of the universe,

"*Noting* that, although there is a general interest in astronomy, it is often difficult for the general public to gain access to information and knowledge on the subject,

"*Conscious* that each society has developed legends, myths and traditions concerning the sky, the planets and the stars which form part of its cultural heritage,

"*Welcoming* resolution 33 C/25 adopted by the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization on 19 October 2005, to express its support for the declaration of 2009 as the International Year of Astronomy, with a view to highlighting the importance of astronomical sciences and their contribution to knowledge and development,

"*Noting* that the International Astronomical Union has been supporting the initiative since 2003 and that it will act to grant the project the widest impact,

"*Convinced* that the Year could play a crucial role, inter alia, in raising public awareness of the importance of astronomy and basic sciences for sustainable development, promoting access to the universal knowledge of fundamental science through the excitement generated by the subject of astronomy, supporting formal and informal science education in schools as well as through science centres and museums and other relevant means, stimulating a long-term increase in student enrolment in the fields of science and technology, and supporting scientific literacy,

"1. *Decides* to declare 2009 the International Year of Astronomy;

"2. *Designates* the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization as the lead agency and focal point for the Year, and invites it to organize, in this capacity, activities to be realized during the Year, in collaboration with other relevant entities of the United Nations system, the International Astronomical Union, the European Southern Observatory and astronomical societies and groups throughout the world, and, in this regard, notes that the activities of the Year will be funded from voluntary contributions, including from the private sector;

"3. *Encourages* all Member States, the United Nations system and all other actors to take advantage of the Year to promote actions at all levels aimed at increasing awareness among the public of the importance of astronomical sciences and promoting widespread access to new knowledge and experiences of astronomical observation."

3. At its 28th meeting, on 16 November, the Committee had before it a draft resolution entitled "International Year of Astronomy, 2009" (A/C.2/62/L.36), submitted by the Vice-Chairman of the Committee, Hassan Ali Saleh (Lebanon), on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/62/L.11.

4. At the same meeting, the Committee was informed that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

5. Before the adoption of the draft resolution, statements were made by the Vice-Chairman of the Committee, Hassan Ali Saleh (Lebanon), and the representative of Egypt (see A/C.2/62/SR.28).

6. Also at its 28th meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.2/62/L.36 (see para. 14, draft resolution I).

7. In light of the adoption of draft resolution A/C.2/62/L.36, draft resolution A/C.2/62/L.11 was withdrawn by its sponsors.

B. Draft resolutions A/C.2/62/L.26 and A/C.2/62/L.52

8. At its 25th meeting, on 8 November, the representative of Pakistan, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Science and technology for development" (A/C.2/62/L.26), which read:

"*The General Assembly*,

"*Recalling* its resolutions 58/200 of 23 December 2003, 59/220 of 22 December 2004 and 60/205 of 22 December 2005,

"*Recognizing* the vital role that science and technology can play in development and in facilitating efforts to eradicate poverty, achieve food security, fight diseases, improve education, protect the environment, accelerate the pace of economic diversification and transformation and improve productivity and competitiveness,

"*Recalling* the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society,

"*Recognizing* that international support can help developing countries to benefit from technological advances and can enhance their productive capacity,

"*Underscoring* the role that traditional knowledge can play in technological development and in the sustainable management and use of natural resources,

"*Recognizing* the catalysing role of information and communication technologies in promoting and facilitating the achievement of all development goals, and in this regard stressing the importance of the contribution of the World Summit on the Information Society process to the building of a people-centred, balanced and inclusive information society so as to enhance digital opportunities for all people in order to help bridge the digital divide,

"*Recalling* the Tunis Commitment and the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society of the second phase of the World Summit on the Information Society and the Geneva Declaration of Principles and the Geneva Plan of Action of the first phase of the Summit,

"*Acknowledging with appreciation* the role played by the International Telecommunication Union in the organization of the two phases of the World Summit,

"*Welcoming* the adoption of the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building of the United Nations Environment Programme,

"*Acknowledging* the urgent need to bridge the digital divide and to assist developing countries to benefit from the potential of information and communications technology,

"*Reaffirming* the need to enhance the science and technology programmes of the relevant entities of the United Nations system,

"*Noting with appreciation* the work of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development, in collaboration with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, in helping developing countries to carry out science, technology and innovation policy reviews and in establishing a network of centres of excellence in science and technology for developing countries,

"*Taking note with interest* of the establishment of the inter-agency cooperation network on biotechnology, UN-Biotech, as described in the report of the Secretary-General,

"*Taking note* of the report of the Secretary-General on science and technology for development,

"1. *Reaffirms its commitment* to:

"(a) Strengthen and enhance existing mechanisms and to support initiatives for research and development, including through voluntary partnerships between the public and private sectors, to address the special needs of developing countries in the areas of health, agriculture, conservation, sustainable use of natural resources and environmental management, energy, forestry and the impact of climate change;

"(b) Promote and facilitate, as appropriate, access to, and development, transfer and diffusion of, technologies, including environmentally sound technologies and the corresponding know-how, to developing countries;

"(c) Assist developing countries in their efforts to promote and develop national strategies for human resources and science and technology, which are primary drivers of national capacity-building for development;

"(d) Promote and support greater efforts to develop renewable sources of energy, such as solar, wind and geothermal energy;

"(e) Implement policies at the national and international levels to attract both public and private investment, domestic and foreign, that enhances knowledge, transfers technology on mutually agreed terms and raises productivity;

"(f) Support the efforts of developing countries, individually and collectively, to harness new agricultural technologies in order to increase agricultural productivity through environmentally sustainable means;

"2. *Recognizes* that the gap in technology and scientific capabilities between developed and developing countries, especially the least developed

countries, is a continuing concern, as it impedes the capacity of many developing countries to participate fully in the global economy;

"3. *Recognizes also* that science and technology are vital for sustainable economic growth and poverty eradication, and stresses that the technology gap between developed and developing countries constitutes a major challenge for developing countries in their efforts to achieve development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals;

"4. *Stresses* the need to promote and facilitate access to the development, transfer and diffusion of technologies for the developing countries through the articulation of policies and measures to foster an enabling environment to facilitate the acquisition and development of technology and to enhance innovation capacity, on the basis of the mandates contained in the Doha Ministerial Declaration;

"5. *Recognizes* that science and technology, including information and communications technology, are vital for the achievement of development goals and that international support can help developing countries to benefit from technological advancements and enhance their productive capacity, and in this regard reaffirms the commitment to promoting and facilitating, as appropriate, access to and the development, transfer and diffusion of technologies, including environmentally sound technologies and corresponding know-how, for developing countries;

"6. *Encourages* existing arrangements and the further promotion of regional, subregional and interregional joint research and development projects by, where feasible, mobilizing existing scientific and research and development resources and by networking sophisticated scientific facilities and research equipment;

"7. *Requests* the Commission on Science and Technology for Development to provide a forum to address within its mandate the special needs of developing countries in areas such as agriculture, rural development, information and communications technology and environmental management;

"8. *Encourages* the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, in collaboration with relevant partners, to continue to undertake science, technology and innovation policy reviews, with a view to assisting developing countries and countries with economies in transition in identifying the measures that are needed to integrate science, technology and innovation policies in their national development strategies;

"9. *Encourages* the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and other relevant organizations to assist developing countries in their efforts to integrate science, technology and innovation policies in national development strategies;

"10. *Urges* the international community to continue to work towards facilitating an adequate diffusion of scientific and technical knowledge and transfer of, access to and acquisition of technology for developing countries;

"11. *Underscores* that the transfer of technology to developing countries shall be provided under fair and affordable terms, including on concessional and preferential terms;

"12. *Calls for* continued collaboration between United Nations entities and other international organizations in implementing the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society, with a view to putting the potential of information and communications technology at the service of development through policy research on the digital divide and on new challenges of the information society, as well as technical assistance activities involving multi-stakeholder partnerships;

"13. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session a report on the implementation of the present resolution and recommendations for future follow-up."

9. At its 33rd meeting, on 7 December, the Committee had before it a draft resolution entitled "Science and technology for development" (A/C.2/62/L.52), submitted by the Vice-Chairman of the Committee, Hassan Ali Saleh (Lebanon), on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/62/L.26.

10. At the same meeting, the Committee was informed that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications (see A/C.2/62/SR.33).

11. Also at the 33rd meeting, the representative of Austria, in her capacity as facilitator, orally corrected draft resolution A/C.2/62/L.52 as follows:

(a) Operative paragraph 3 was inserted directly after operative paragraph 7, operative paragraph 9 was deleted, and the paragraphs following operative paragraph 2 were renumbered accordingly;

(b) In operative paragraph 8, the words "under fair, affordable, transparent and mutually agreed terms, including on concessional and preferential terms, in a manner conducive to social and economic welfare for the benefit of society" were added at the end of the paragraph.

12. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.2/62/L.52, as orally corrected (see para. 14, draft resolution II).

13. In light of the adoption of draft resolution A/C.2/62/L.52, draft resolution A/C.2/62/L.26 was withdrawn by its sponsors.

III. Recommendations of the Second Committee

14. The Second Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolutions:

Draft resolution I
International Year of Astronomy, 2009

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 61/185 of 20 December 2006 on the proclamation of international years,

Aware that astronomy is one of the oldest basic sciences and that it has contributed and still contributes fundamentally to the evolution of other sciences and applications in a wide range of fields,

Recognizing that astronomical observations have profound implications for the development of science, philosophy, culture and the general conception of the universe,

Noting that, although there is a general interest in astronomy, it is often difficult for the general public to gain access to information and knowledge on the subject,

Conscious that each society has developed legends, myths and traditions concerning the sky, the planets and the stars which form part of its cultural heritage,

Welcoming resolution 33 C/25 adopted by the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization on 19 October 2005,[1] to express its support for the declaration of 2009 as the International Year of Astronomy, with a view to highlighting the importance of astronomical sciences and their contribution to knowledge and development,

Noting that the International Astronomical Union has been supporting the initiative since 2003 and that it will act to grant the project the widest impact,

Convinced that the Year could play a crucial role, inter alia, in raising public awareness of the importance of astronomy and basic sciences for sustainable development, promoting access to the universal knowledge of fundamental science through the excitement generated by the subject of astronomy, supporting formal and informal science education in schools as well as through science centres and museums and other relevant means, stimulating a long-term increase in student enrolment in the fields of science and technology, and supporting scientific literacy,

1. *Decides* to declare 2009 the International Year of Astronomy;

2. *Designates* the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization as the lead agency and focal point for the Year, and invites it to organize, in this capacity, activities to be realized during the Year, in collaboration with other relevant entities of the United Nations system, the International

[1] United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, *Records of the General Conference, 33rd session, Paris, 3-21 October 2005* (Paris, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), vol. 1, *Resolutions*, chap. V.

Astronomical Union, the European Southern Observatory and astronomical societies and groups throughout the world, and, in this regard, notes that the activities of the Year will be funded from voluntary contributions, including from the private sector;

3. *Encourages* all Member States, the United Nations system and all other actors to take advantage of the Year to promote actions at all levels aimed at increasing awareness among the public of the importance of astronomical sciences and promoting widespread access to new knowledge and experiences of astronomical observation.

Draft resolution II
Science and technology for development

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 58/200 of 23 December 2003, 59/220 of 22 December 2004 and 60/205 of 22 December 2005,

Recalling also its resolution 61/207 of 20 December 2006 and its reference to science and technology,

Recalling further Economic and Social Council resolution 2006/46 of 28 July 2006,

Recognizing the vital role that science and technology, including environmentally sound technologies, can play in development and in facilitating efforts to eradicate poverty, achieve food security, fight diseases, improve education, protect the environment, accelerate the pace of economic diversification and transformation and improve productivity and competitiveness,

Recalling the 2005 World Summit Outcome,[1]

Recalling also the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society,[2]

Recognizing that international support can help developing countries to benefit from technological advances and can enhance their productive capacity,

Underscoring the role that traditional knowledge can play in technological development, and in the sustainable management and use of natural resources,

Acknowledging the urgent need to bridge the digital divide and to assist developing countries in accessing the potential benefits of information and communications technology,

Welcoming the adoption of the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building of the United Nations Environment Programme,[3]

Reaffirming the need to enhance the science and technology programmes of the relevant entities of the United Nations system,

Noting with appreciation the collaboration between the Commission on Science and Technology for Development and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development in establishing a network of centres of excellence in science and technology for developing countries and in designing and carrying out science, technology and innovation policy reviews,

Taking note with interest of the establishment of the inter-agency cooperation network on biotechnology, UN-Biotech, as described in the report of the Secretary-General on science and technology for development,[4]

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General,

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[1] See resolution 60/1.

[2] See A/60/687 and A/C.2/59/3, annex, chap. I.

[3] UNEP/GC.23/6/Add.1 and Corr.1, annex.

[4] A/62/136.

Encouraging the development of initiatives to promote private sector engagement in technology transfer and technological and scientific cooperation,

1. *Reaffirms its commitment* to:

(a) Strengthen and enhance existing mechanisms and to support initiatives for research and development, including through voluntary partnerships between the public and private sectors, to address the special needs of developing countries in the areas of health, agriculture, conservation, sustainable use of natural resources and environmental management, energy, forestry and the impact of climate change;

(b) Promote and facilitate, as appropriate, access to, and development, transfer and diffusion of, technologies, including environmentally sound technologies and the corresponding know-how, to developing countries;

(c) Assist developing countries in their efforts to promote and develop national strategies for human resources and science and technology, which are primary drivers of national capacity-building for development;

(d) Promote and support greater efforts to develop renewable sources of energy, such as solar, wind and geothermal energy;

(e) Implement policies at the national and international levels to attract both public and private investment, domestic and foreign, that enhances knowledge, transfers technology on mutually agreed terms and raises productivity;

(f) Support the efforts of developing countries, individually and collectively, to harness new agricultural technologies in order to increase agricultural productivity through environmentally sustainable means;

2. *Recognizes* that science and technology, including information and communications technology, are vital for the achievement of internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, and for the full participation of developing countries in the global economy;

3. *Requests* the Commission on Science and Technology for Development to provide a forum within which to continue to assist the Economic and Social Council as the focal point in the system-wide follow-up of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society[2] and to address within its mandate, in accordance with Council resolution 2006/46, the special needs of developing countries in areas such as agriculture, rural development, information and communications technology and environmental management;

4. *Encourages* the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, in collaboration with relevant partners, to continue to undertake science, technology and innovation policy reviews, with a view to assisting developing countries and countries with economies in transition in identifying the measures that are needed to integrate science, technology and innovation policies in their national development strategies;

5. *Encourages* the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and other relevant organizations to assist developing countries in their efforts to integrate science, technology and innovation policies in national development strategies;

6. *Encourages* Governments to strengthen and foster investment in research and development for environmentally sound technologies and to promote the involvement of the business and financial sectors in the development of these technologies, and invites the international community to support these efforts;

7. *Encourages* existing arrangements and the further promotion of regional, subregional and interregional joint research and development projects by, where feasible, mobilizing existing scientific and research and development resources and by networking sophisticated scientific facilities and research equipment;

8. *Encourages* the international community to continue to facilitate, in view of the difference in level of development between countries, an adequate diffusion of scientific and technical knowledge and transfer of, access to, and acquisition of technology for developing countries, under fair, affordable, transparent and mutually agreed terms, including on concessional and preferential terms, in a manner conducive to social and economic welfare for the benefit of society;

9. *Calls for* continued collaboration between United Nations entities and other international organizations, civil society and the private sector in implementing the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society, with a view to putting the potential of information and communications technology at the service of development through policy research on the digital divide and on new challenges of the information society, as well as technical assistance activities, involving multi-stakeholder partnerships;

10. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session a report on the implementation of the present resolution and recommendations for future follow-up, including lessons learned in integrating science, technology and innovation policies in national development strategies.